

DESPITE conditions at Dale Farm being really harsh now, following Basildon Council's brutal multi-million pound attempted eviction which began on October 19th, the community is defiant, united, cheerful and determined to stay together.

Hundreds of riot police, bailiffs and contractors with heavy digging equipment moved in on that day, throwing families and their caravans off the site and leaving a trail of destruction.

In order to make living conditions on the site as intolerable as possible, the council has dug huge trenches where many of the caravans used to be situated.

Now there is mud everywhere and residents are very fearful for the safety of their children when the trenches fill up with water.

Despite the ruthless actions of the council, the Dale Farm community are standing firm and defiant and there are now more caravans on the site than before.

Speaking to News Line at the Basildon Council Offices on Tuesday, where the residents are fighting for their right to legal sites for their caravans, Gratton Puxon, Dale Farm Residents Association Secretary said: 'We have put in a planning application for 12 plots, but we've also put in an additional request for 50 plots, all at Church Road, Laindon, Basildon.

'Today's appeal is for the 12 new pitches, and this is being opposed by the council.
'We are disgusted at what has happened.

'We are up against a racist policy from a council which is spending millions on ethnic cleansing.

'We've got a lot of families living in very bad conditions after the attempted eviction.

'There are more caravans at Dale Farm now than before the eviction.'

Richard Sheridan, Chairman of Dale Farm Residents Association, is speaking at this Sunday's News Line Anniversary Rally.

He said: 'They are getting rid of 429 jobs in Basildon Council because they say they have to cut their budgets, but they've spent millions trying to get rid of us.

'It is appalling what the government has done to us, especially the Home Office, depriving people of education and disrupting people's lives.

'I'm looking forward to the News Line Rally on Sunday and we'll try and get a good turn out.'

Back at Dale Farm on Tuesday afternoon, John Sheridan told News Line: 'There are young kids here with no facilities. We all had toilets, running water, electric, but it's all been cut off. It's a human disgrace.

'Human beings, old and sick people, are being treated like rats.

'The reason there are more caravans here than before is that people have come home.'